2:Purcell G-4 (no date) 1951 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1
Chinese

their native country; moreover they have a stubbornness of disposition which distinguishes them from their fellow Chinese. (It is worthy of note that the most numerous among the early Communists in the Nanyang were the Hailams and Hakkas.)[1]

Sun Yat-sen said: 'The Chinese people are of the Han or Chinese race with common blood, common language, common religion, and common customs—a single race.' As regards 'blood' in any scientific sense this is manifestly untrue; on the contrary,

> The modern Chinese people is an amalgamation of many elements originally different from one another. . . . In colour; in stature, above all in cephalic indices, about 42 per cent are mesocephalic and about 43 per cent are brachycephalic, and about 15 per cent dolichocephalic. Even these classes are distinctly subdivided into dolicho-leptorrhinic and dolicho-platyrrhinic. There is also a low-headed type, and, in the South, a trace of a dwarf element. . . . Prehistory points to a race already mixed in the basin of the Yellow River. . . .[2]

In spite, however, of a number of modifications and reservations, the remainder of the statement of the Father of the Revolution, especially regarding religion and customs, could be convincingly maintained. Allowing for the numerous variations which have been suggested above, the Chinese of Southeast Asia, drawn mostly from Fukien and Kwangtung, are quite remarkably homogeneous. Not only have they marked physical characteristics in common; their customs, their religion, their attitude of mind have an almost uncanny similarity. What Clement Williams remarked of their shops in Bhamo on the Yunnan-Burma frontier nearly ninety years ago—'the likeness of one Burmese to another is striking, but the absolute sameness of one Chinese shop to another is truly wonderful'—is equally true of the 'sameness' of Chinese temples, houses, ornaments, customs, methods of mining and agriculture, and handicrafts all over the Southeast Asian area, from the city of Cholon to a remote *tienda* in Mindanao, or from the tin-fields of Larut to the pepper plantations of Cambodia. Nor is this merely a superficial impression (such as 'all Chinese look alike'); it derives from their common steeping in Chinese culture, even though the latter's springs of inspiration have ceased to well up from the depths and it has been for long (as Professor Toynbee says) in a state of petrification.

[1] See p. 370 regarding the Japanese identification of Hailams with Communism.

[2] *China Year Book* 1932.

2:Purcell G-4 (no date) 1951 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1
Chinese
China AFI

in quantity into the colonial possessions and received the praise that is reserved for an efficient and well-oiled machine. But a movement was already incubating which was to change the whole attitude towards the Chinese of Europeans and indigenous peoples alike. The birth of Chinese nationalism coincided with the numbers of the Chinese emigrants reaching a new high level.

Sun Yat-sen in his *Three Principles of the People* said (as Mazzini had said long before him) that 'nationalism must precede internationalism'. Continuing the passage on race already quoted in part earlier in this chapter he went on:

> But the Chinese have no national spirit; they only know the family and clan groups. Thus China is only a loose sheet of sand. Our position is extremely perilous—if we do not promote nationalism and weld together our four hundred million into a nation, we face a tragedy—the loss of our country and the destruction of our race.[1]

This warning was taken very much to heart by Young China, though the process towards national consciousness had already gone a long way before Sun Yat-sen crystallized the sentiment in these words. The effect of the intense nationalist campaign coupled with an education drive was to make the Chinese everywhere conscious of their separateness as a race and nation, and, in Southeast Asia, to render the peoples among whom they lived aware that they regarded themselves as a race and nation apart. Almost simultaneously the seed of nationalism had been sown in the hearts of the other races and they were beginning to feel that they, in their turn, faced a tragedy—unless they, too, promoted nationalism and welded themselves into a nation, they might suffer the loss of their country and the destruction of their race.

The simultaneous growth of two such sentiments within one country meant that the communities grew nationalistic spines which when they were erected pricked their neighbours painfully. It was like Schopenhauer's definition of human beings as 'hedgehogs nestling together for warmth'. And the 'warmth' they sought in common (if such a metaphor can properly be used of countries sweltering in intense tropical heat) was the livelihood that Southeast Asia had, so far, abundantly afforded. But with large-scale immigration came competition, and the growth of economic rivalry between the races was coincident with the growth of nationalism.

[1] Lecture 1.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai
Southeast Asia AL1

development who fear that these countries might not be able to expand their production faster than population expands, in which case the result of economic development efforts will be a greater quantity of people with little or no gains in the quality of living conditions. In Zinkin's words, "The growth of population and the impact of the West have between them, in the last hundred years, so upset the delicate balance that most of the Asian countryside is now bankrupt . . . . The alarming feature of the peasant economy of Asia is not simply that it is desparately poor. It is that in recent decades, and in most countries of Asia, it has been growing poorer. It is a changing, dynamic economy. But it has been changing for the worse."[23]

Poverty is not new in Southeast Asia. What is new is the awareness of poverty and the conviction that something can be done about it. "A great change", reported Harold Butler, "is stirring Eastern society. The consciousness of misery has been created by the growing realization that it is not the inescapable lot of the poor and that chances of better life now exist."[24] All of the countries in Southeast Asia have within the past decade set up official agencies charged with planning and promoting economic development; and for international assistance to hasten it, is the constant

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23. Zinkin, op. cit., p. 34.

24. Harold Butler, Problems of Industry in the East (Geneva: International Labor Office, 1938, Studies and Reports, Series B, No. 29), pp. 65-66.